DRUG ABUSE AND ILLEGAL NARCOTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, I now recognize the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) for 3 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker, tonight is Tuesday night and it is the night that I reserve to come before the House on the issue of illegal narcotics and how the problem of drug abuse and illegal narcotics affects our Nation and the impact that illegal narcotics has upon our society, this Congress, and the American people.

Tonight I want to provide a brief update of some of the information that we have obtained. Our subcommittee, which I am privileged to chair, the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, has as one of its primary charters and responsibilities to help develop a coherent policy, at least from the perspective of the House of Representatives, and working with the other body, the United States Senate and also the White House, the administration, to come up with a coherent strategy to deal with the problem of drug abuse and illegal narcotics.

I have been on the floor the impact which really knows no boundaries today in the United States. Almost every family is affected in some way by drug abuse, illegal narcotics, or the ravages of drug-related overdose and death.

I have cited a most recent statistic, which is 15,973 Americans died in 1998, the last figures we have total for drug-related deaths. And according to our drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, who testified before our subcommittee, over 52,000 Americans died in the last recorded year of drug-related deaths either directly or indirectly.

We do not know the exact figure because sometimes a child who is beaten to death by a parent who is on illegal narcotics is not counted as a victim. Sometimes a spouse who is abused to the point of death is not counted as a victim. Sometimes a bus driver who is on an illegal narcotic that has had a fatal vehicle crash, the number of victims there are not counted in the tally. But we do know the total is dramatic.

This past week our subcommittee had the opportunity to hear from the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and officials came in and briefed our subcommittee, some of the Members in the House, about some of the most recent findings. And the findings are quite alarming, particularly among our young people.

They confirm what most Americans know and what many parents fear, that illegal narcotics are more prevalent on our society. The study that they reviewed for the members of the subcommittee revealed, in fact, that there have been some dramatic increases in drug use and abuse among our young people.

I brought tonight some charts from that study and also from a study on national youth risk behavior. This shows the percentage of high school students who have used methamphetamines, some figures that show in 9th grade we were up to 6.3 percent, in 10th grade 9.3 percent, 11th grade 10 percent, and 12th grade 11.5 percent.

These are pretty dramatic figures when we stop and think that we are talking about young people and having as high a percentage as we have reported here have used methamphetamine. And methamphetamine, if my colleagues are not familiar with methamphetamine, can be more damaging and create more damage than the crack epidemic that we had in the 1980s. To have these percentages of our young people having experimented or used methamphetamine is quite disturbing.

The other thing many people do not realize about methamphetamine is methamphetamine does an incredible job of destroying the brain and it is not a drug which allows you to have a some replenishing of damaged brain cells. It is not a narcotic that leaves temporary damage. Methamphetamine induces an almost Parkinson’s-like damage to the brain and does incredible damage and results in bizarre behavior.

Now, we have had drug-related deaths throughout the United States, some in California, some in Louisiana. Next Monday we will be in Sioux City, Iowa, the heartland of America, which is also experiencing an incredible methamphetamine epidemic. That area has been hit hard by Mexican methamphetamine and we have reports again of incredible numbers people throughout the Midwest, the far West, now in the South and East, who are falling victim to methamphetamine.

This chart should be a shocker to every parent out in America, to every Member of Congress who sees this. These are some pretty dramatic figures. When we stop and consider that these figures really were not even registering some 6 or 7 years ago, these figures really were not even registering, shows that we have got to do a better job of first of all controlling the substance, law enforcement going after those who traffic in this deadly substance.

Also, it is absolutely incumbent that we do a better job in educating our young people and preventing people from getting hooked on this drug. Now, getting hooked on drugs is bad enough. But this drug does incredible damage, as I said.

We have had Dr. Leschner, who heads up the National Institute of Drug Abuse, testify before our subcommittee about the permanent damage that is done to the brain with this drug. This is not a question of addiction or use a little and come out of it. This is a question of becoming a victim of this. And the question of addiction is really too late for those who get on methamphetamine. There is no recovery. There is no turning back. Because they have induced some incredible damage to their brain and to their ability to function as a normal human being.

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Addiction and treatment might sound good and well-intended, but in fact methamphetamine is the end of the road for many people. Again this is absolutely a disturbing chart and figure to show us that 11.5 percent of our high school students being reported as using cocaine. That figure in 1999 is now up to 4 percent, a 100 percent increase in cocaine use among our young people. This again is another dramatic increase in a hard and very destructive narcotic. These figures are reported to us again last week by CDC and indicate a disturbing trend. This is the Congress, the Republican and Democrat efforts to put together a multi-billion-dollar campaign, $1 billion in public funding over a 3-year period supplemented by $1 billion in donated service and time toward that effort, so a multi-billion-dollar education campaign. I know some of my colleagues have seen some ads on television but quite frankly with the results that we are experiencing with our young people, we are missing the target. We see a dramatic increase in cocaine use, particularly among our young people, a skyrocketing figure for the crack epidemic of 1993. From the beginning of this administration, we had about 2 percent of our high school students who over used cocaine from 1993. From the beginning of this administration to the current time we see a doubling in use, another dramatic figure. Somehow the message must have gotten lost in this period here, the beginning of this administration, that illegal narcotics were something that could be tolerated and possibly used and that is unfortunate that any message that conditioned or gave any message other than “Just Say No.” Actually we have had incredible results from that lack of a direct specific message. A doubling again of the percentage of high school students who have ever used cocaine, disturbing. I am sure, to parents in the latest statistic we have from the Centers for Disease Control.

I think this next chart and again this information is provided to us by the...
Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta to our subcommittee last week is another chart figure that goes back to 1992. Thirty-one percent of the students had used marijuana in that period. Now we have almost half of the students reported last week, 1997–1999 have used marijuana. Many people refer to marihuana as a soft drug, and maybe a lot of the boomers who used marijuana in college or in school in the 1960s and 1970s were not much affected by use of marijuana. Unfortunately, the marijuana that is on the streets today has very high levels of purity. We have some testimony in our subcommittee about the damage that the current high purity marijuana does to young people. I was shocked to learn, also, from NIDA, our National Institute of Drug abuse, that marijuana is now the most addictive narcotic. Even though it is again commonly referred to as a soft drug, it is the most addictive drug and it is also referred to as a gateway drug. So young people who think it is fashionable to use marijuana are on the increase. It is unfortunate that this administration gave sort of a “just say maybe” policy with the appointment of a liberal and I think mixed message chief health officer of the United States and that officer was Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders and she said just say maybe. I do not think that the President of the United States really showed the leadership and provided the direction to get the message out to our young people about the problem of illegal narcotics use. That actually I think has been substantiated by a little research we did.

I mentioned last week, and we only had 15 minutes of special order last week, that a lady had come up to me during one of our recent visits home and she said, “I have never heard President Clinton talk about the war on drugs.” So I ran a tally of all of the public recorded deployments around the globe, and out of curiosity, I had our staff run a tally of all of the public recorded deployments, and she said, “I have never heard President Clinton talk about the war on drugs.” What was absolutely startling is that the President has referred to the war on drugs eight times, you can count it on just eight fingers, since he took office in public recorded statements, he has referred to the war on drugs. Basically what happened in 1992–1993 is we closed down the war on drugs. If we take another chart and look at the drug use and abuse and prevalence particulars, we see a decline in the Bush and the Reagan administration, and then we see an incline during this administration, the administration tolerating this use, and it is recorded again in the drug use and abuse, and then we see, some of the nearly doubling in drug use and abuse.

If methamphetamine, marijuana and cocaine are not bad enough, we see some dramatic increases in suburban teenage heroin use. These statistics were just provided last month, in May. It shows that we have risen in suburban heroin use from 500,000 in 1996 to nearly 1 million in 1999, a startling figure for one of the drugs again that is about as deadly as you can find on the streets across this land. The purity levels of the heroin that we are finding are not what the purity levels of heroin in the 1970s and 1980s. These drugs, this heroin is a deadly substance, sometimes 70 percent purity level. That is why we have incredible overdose deaths from heroin that is on the street today, another dramatic figure and another dramatic increase in a particularly deadly illegal narcotic.

One of the myths that we often hear and we had a debate on the House floor about whether or not to restart the war on drugs. Again, I must point out to my colleagues that in fact the war on drugs was closed down by the Clinton administration in 1993. The Democrat-controlled House of Representatives, the Senate, and the White House in 1995 did inestimable damage to what had formerly been a formal and organized war on drugs. They cut the source country program stopping drugs in a cost-effective manner at their source, certainly a Federal responsibility to cut the military and deployed the military and other dramatic steps that were taken in the interdiction, and that was mainly a surveillance role in finding drugs and spotting drugs as they came from the source countries, certainly a role that local and State law enforcement cannot do, a responsibility of the Federal Government to protect us from a danger coming towards our border.

They closed down and cut these programs by 50 percent, took the military out or deployed the military and other deployments around the globe, and what happened really was an emphasis to move toward treatment. They started putting all of the eggs in the treatment basket. I often think of what they did as a little bit like fighting World War II or any armed conflict that we have been in. Can you imagine not going after the enemy; not going after the source of the destruction, the enemy’s reign, the enemy’s reign on us? That is basically the strategy that was adopted, a strange strategy that actually said let us just treat the wounded in battle.

Of course, the policy and the legislation that was adopted, we had this Congress under the control of the Democratic majority from 1992 to 1995 put the money into treatment, and we can see the trend. We often hear this debate, oh, we need to just treat people. We can treat our way out of this problem. That policy has had a very dramatic effect in Baltimore. Baltimore, in fact, has had a steady number of murders which have exceeded 300 for each of the past recent years, while other areas like New York, with a zero tolerance policy, like Richmond, with the Project Exile going after tough enforcement, have cut the murders by some 50 percent in those cities and even more dramatically.

The zero tolerance policies, and we will show them, and the facts support this, it is not something if you are making up, have worked and cut drug abuse and crime at every level across the board.

The tolerant, liberal, the noneffective attitude of Baltimore has resulted in a disaster for that city by any measure, by deaths. The number of addicts in Baltimore have jumped, according to one city council person who has said publicly, in one in 8 in the population that is some 60,000 to 80,000 heroin and drug addicts in Baltimore as a result of a liberal policy, as a result of lack of enforcement, as a result of only going to a policy of treatment.
It has not worked. It does not work. And this is the path that we have been headed on, as far as Federal policy. This is the path that we have been on, we had the staff make up, and we wanted to put altogether in one chart what we are doing with treatment.

People say we are not spending enough money again in treatment. This is a blue line showing treatment. It shows that on a steady increase we see what has happened in interdiction, dramatic decreases. They start in the period of the Clinton administration, where a Democrat-controlled House and Senate, the White House making a policy to cut interdiction.

These are international programs, that would be stopping drugs at their source; that is also cut. If we look at where we are heading, we are trying to get back to the 1992-1993 levels in terms of those dollars of that time in spending in international programs, again, stopping drugs at their source and also in the interdiction, getting the intelligence information.

If we have intelligence on people who are trafficking in narcotics, and it is real information, it is accurate information, we can go after those who are dealing in that death and destruction. When we cut that out, we have an incredible volume of illegal narcotics coming into the United States, and that is exactly what has happened now.

To compound the problem, what has happened is our major operations center for our illegal narcotics advance work for surveillance, going after drug traffickers was basically closed down last May 1 when the administration failed to negotiate with Panama for not keeping our military base open, but keeping our forward drug surveillance with a satellite operating in Panama.

General Wilkens, who is in charge of our Southern Command, the Southern Command overlooks the drug production and trafficking zone. General Wilkens provided our subcommittee a letter last week and said we are down to about a third of our former capability prior to the time that we had Panama open and the main center of operations for forward-operating locations.

This chart does again debunk that we are not concentrating on treatment. Certainly not a ton of money in treatment. It is doubled as we saw from the other one. Where we have lost the momentum is going after these huge supplies of illegal narcotics, both at their source and on the way to our shores.

Now, one of the things that we know is where these narcotics are coming from. This is another chart showing that, does not require a Ph.D. or a lot of study. We knew that in 1993, when this administration took over, that we had 90 percent of the cocaine coming from Bolivia, Peru, a tiny bit from Colombia. This chart shows Colombia and Andean cocaine production. This shows Colombia had cocaine production, 1991-1992. These figures have not been doctored in any way. This is just graphing cocaine production in that era. Almost none in Colombia, most of it was coming from Peru, up here, and from Bolivia, about 90 percent of it.

The former chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, and Mr. Zelliff, who came in immediately before him and had assumed the responsibility for helping develop a drug strategy under the new majority, said we know where these narcotics are coming from. Let us take a few dollars and put it in going after the drugs at their source. That is what was done in 1995 by the new majority.

We targeted three areas, Peru, Colombia and Bolivia. That is because those are the only places where they produce cocaine. We were able to establish programs in Peru and Bolivia with the cooperation of President Fujimori, which this administration has trashed recently and who won a legitimate re-election, and still this administration trashed. I can tell you, having gone to Lima, Peru, and visited Peru before President Fujimori took over, there was absolute chaos in the country. The production of narcotics was running rampant, terrorists were killing and maiming in the villages, the City of Lima was understood under siege, and President Fujimori went after the drug traffickers, shot down those that deal with death and destruction and drugs, and brought that country to the order and the prosperity it is now seeing. He, in fact, with a little tiny bit of our aid, just several millions of dollars, took Peru from a major producer down by some 50 percent reduction, in fact a 65 percent reduction is our latest figure, in cocaine production in Peru.

Bolivia, with the help of President Banzer, who took over, and we went down and discussed their programs, a little bit of assistance, some crop alternatives so the peasants would be growing something other than coca, and those programs work. There has been more than a 50 percent reduction in Bolivia of cocaine.

We pleaded with this administration to get aid and assistance to Colombia, the other producing area, and on every occasion the President blocked aid to Colombia; on every occasion the State Department thwarted our efforts to get even a few helicopters up into the Andean region to go after the coca that was being produced, and, if you want to get into heroin, there was no heroin produced to speak of in 1992-1993, the beginning figures. The 

So the direct policy of this administration and the liberals in the Congress helped make Colombia the producer of 80 to 90 percent of the cocaine in 6 years, and probably 75 percent of the heroin in 6 years. Until early this spring, the President and this administration never brought before the Congress any type of cooperative plan to deal with the situation in Colombia. Unfortunately, now it has caught up in the legislative process.

I call on my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to bring this forth. This plan works. This is not, again, rocket science. We can stop hard drugs from coming into our borders. We are not going to stop all of them, but this shows exactly what has taken place, and I think one of the most graphic portrayals that has been produced from our subcommittee.

Again, this should be the “chart of shame” for this administration and the policies of the other side. This shows in 1993 the production of cocaine and heroin produced in Colombia, 1993, almost nothing for cocaine. For heroin, in 1993, almost none produced in Colombia. Now it produces 75 percent.

Congratulations to the Clinton Administration. This is a great legacy, that you have managed to concentrate the drug production of two of the most deadly drugs in nearly 7 years here in one country in which you have blocked any assistance. It is an incredible legacy, and, unfortunately, it has resulted in a rash of epidemics of the use of these, particularly, as I just cited, according to the CDC report we got last week, among our young people, an incredible volume being produced in those countries.

Again, this is not rocket science. We know where it is coming from. We know heroin is coming out of Colombia, 75 percent being used in the United States. We know that by any seizure that is done around the United States.

Madam Speaker, to wind this up, we do need a bipartisan cooperative effort. We must learn by the mistakes that have been made. We must learn by putting together a plan that does work and move forward with it. Next week, hopefully, we will have an hour to tell the rest of the story, as Paul Harvey says.

MOVING THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE WTO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, on the eve of last year’s meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, I was joined by 11 of my colleagues in this House on a bipartisan basis in calling on then-Inner Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky to help move the accession of the Republic of Armenia to the WTO. Recently the Trade Representative’s office provided me with